



STANDING STRONG IN TRYING TIMES

The Book of Daniel

Standing Strong In Exile

Key idea:

To stand strong in our land of exile we must remember our true identity as God's people, trust in His Sovereignty, and walk with wisdom and humility as we are in the world but not of it.

Key text:

Daniel 1

Key points:

1. Babylon worked to replace the core identity of Daniel and his friends through education, new names, and seducing their loyalty through the gift of sumptuous food.
2. Daniel and his friends did undergo the pagan education but sought to refuse the sumptuous royal food and eat a simple diet instead.
3. Daniel displayed great wisdom and humility in navigating how to maintain his identity while exiled in Babylon.
4. God is seen Sovereignly acting throughout the story, from sending Daniel and his friends into exile, to causing the royal official to be favorably disposed to them, to giving success to their studies and labors.
5. Because of their trust in God's Sovereignty, wisdom, and humility, Daniel and his friends not only survived but thrived and flourished in their land of exile.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to me? Why?
2. Am I surprised by where Daniel resolved to take a stand (over the food)? Which of the three parts of shipping their identity (education, names, or food) would be of most concern to me? Why do I think Daniel made the choice he did?
3. How does Daniel display wisdom and humility? Why is this difficult when I am being pressured by others to conform to an alternate identity?

4. If I were in Daniel's place, would I be tempted to think God was not Sovereign? Why or why not?
5. How is God seen to be Sovereignly watching over Daniel and his friends in this opening chapter? How is this related to Daniel's ability to respond with wisdom and humility rather than in a foolishly arrogant way?
6. Can I think of examples in my own life where I have had to confront a source of pressure on me or my family? Did I respond with humility and wisdom, or did I respond in a foolish and arrogant manner? What was the outcome?
7. What alternate identities (nationality, ethnicity, political affiliation, sexuality, social class, education, work, etc) are most seductive to me? Which ones tempt me to find my core identity in them and which are less of a temptation to me?
8. What practices have I found most helpful in maintaining my identity in Christ?
9. Who will I call or see to encourage this week?

For Further Study:

[Christ, the Church, Christians, and Culture \(series\)](#) - (2010-2011)

[The Church - God's Nation of Exiles](#) (October 31, 2020)

[Peace for the City](#) (May 3, 2015)

[Encouragement for God's Sojourning Exiles](#) (September 5, 2010)

[Living As God's Exile People](#) (July 11, 2010)

[God's Chosen Exile People](#) (May 23, 2010)

[Living As Citizens of Two Kingdoms](#) (January 16, 2011)

Preview of next week: Mark 2:1-12